

Leominster Historical Society



*EXERCISES AT THE ERECTION OF A
STONE IN MEMORY OF THE
FIRST SETTLER*

Leominster Historical Society

EXERCISES

AT THE UNVEILING OF THE BOULDER
MARKING THE SITE OF THE
FIRST HOUSE ERECTED
IN LEOMINSTER,
1725

1725—1910

June Twenty-Third, Nineteen-ten

F74
L6L55

Gift-
Mrs. Geo Leonard Chace
July 27-32.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

BY THE PRESIDENT, PERLEY M. RUSSELL.

Friends and Citizens of Leominster:

We have gathered here today to commemorate the building of the first house in Leominster and to honor those who built better than they knew in the early days of pioneer life and frontier settlement.

One hundred and eighty-five years ago it was no easy task to build a house, for everything had to be done in a primitive way and it took courage and perseverance to accomplish even a humble habitation.

Fifteen years later, one hundred and seventy years ago to-day, the town was incorporated, another important event in its history. This was the natural order of the growing settlement when it realized the importance of a more united government.

Leominster has had an honorable record from the beginning and the citizens of today should feel proud of her growth and of the men who have promoted it.

With the co-operation of Mr. John Yule, who designed and made it we plant here a monument, that will tell the story of Leominster's beginning to the future generations.

Without further remarks I welcome you all most heartily in behalf of the Leominster Historical Society to the remaining exercises of the day.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION.

BY REV. GEORGE RANDOLPH BAKER.

Lord thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Help us to realize that in Thee we live and move and have our being. Make us to know that it is Thyselv who hast brought us unto this hour; that Thou hast chosen the place of our habitation and determined the manner of our life. We make confession—the sense of Thy presence humbles us. We have spoken foolishly, boasting ourselves saying, mine hand hath gotten me this good, blind to the toil of our brother by our side, and still more forgetful of what we have received from our fathers. Make us more thoughtful, teach us to look backward and think of those who have endured hardness, and given us so much of worth. May we see the value of our institutions, and civilization, as we see its cost; how generations have toiled that we might have. Give us the vision of the unfinished task, the sense of fellowship and partnership, with the strong, the eager, the believers of all the ages.

God, our Father, thou dost give us a vision. We see as from afar the light of a glorious day. We see the wilderness blossoming as the rose, and the thirsty land a pool of water. More splendid yet, in Thy day we see an even kindly justice, presiding over the affairs of men, and the strength of each is for the service of all; make us the heralds of the better day, and may these hands pass a richer heritage than we have received.

Eternal God, “a thousand years in Thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past and as a watch in the night,” teach us patience, that we may not fail nor be discouraged until Thou hast set judgment in the earth.

Almighty God be near us now. We dedicate a stone, Thy blessing on our act. We would have it a stone of remembrance; a memorial of the brave man and woman who made here a home. We would have it a memorial of Thy goodness. “Hitherto hath Jehovah helped us.” We would have this stone a shrine, where we and all who see may pledge service, knowing that Thy word doth not return to Thee void and an act of good never passes into nothingness.

In the name of Christ we pray,

Amen.

POEM.

BY CAROLINE I. CHANEY.

Shut out these safe, fair homesteads from your sight,
These broad, green fields, these herds of feeding kine,
The smooth, wide roadways,—all the fruitful trees:
Shut out the neighboring voices and the din
Of distant labor at the humming wheels.

Now gaze, in fancy, on vast wooded slopes
With pools and lakelets in the sheltered depths,
And little streams, quick with the leaping trout,
Where shadowy forms of the great lounging bear
And the shy deer slip into deeper shade.
On these steep hillsides lurks the catamount.
And the sharp rattle of the rouséd snake
Answers the light tread of the frightened deer.
Here silence dwells, save for the woodland birds,
The squirrel's chatter and the drumming grouse
And the wolf's night-cry, howling down the wind;
Silence, not safety, for an ambushed foe
Resentful of his treaty wrongs may hide
At the sharp turn of the deep, wildwood road
And his keen whoop resound in the calm air.

Almost two centuries gone, into this wild
There came a man, wary, with axe and gun,
Came, strong and full of joy at facing life.
The primal instinct of the man, the bird
To make a home, to build a nest was his,
Wherein to shelter spouse and helpless young.
Long before sunrise and when day was done
Still rang the axe among the boding pines.
The sturdiest oaks, to his young, strenuous arm
Bowed their great heads and made obeisance low.
No count of time while light to see, was his,
Then dreamless sleep, till the dim dawn awoke.

The while he cleared and tilled this very spot,
Whereon to build his simple house of logs,
His ready gun close to his hand still stood,
For he remembered savage massacre.
No sport he made of killing the shy friends
Whose life was sweet, as his was sweet to him:

Alas! But he must kill to live, in this wild place
Till the new home shall give him roof and field.
Long, weary miles, led the blazed trail to home—
The old home, wife and child, in that fair place
Where the great river swirled and fretted on,—
Fair Lancaster, swift by the Indian foe
With fire and torture and captivity
Swept into silence and black waste: nor time
Had dulled the horror of that dreadful day
But fearsome courage builded homes anew
While keen-eyed scouts stood by, to 'fend the toil.

The face of this first builder know we not,
Or was he small and lithe, or gaunt and grim.
How housed the soul, it little recks to know.
His strong hands held the first subduing power
That changed the wild to this fair dwelling place.
Here is the work, established, of his hands,
And here, the stone to mark the first home, stands.
How little thought he, as he labored on
Of what should follow that first planting made,
How rich the harvest by his children reaped,
What bitter tares should grow beside the wheat
Even to the garnering,—how, as with fire
The tares should burn, the wheat be gathered in.
Beset are we with dangers far more keen,
Perils of soul and body greater far
Than he, alone with savages and beasts,
Good, clean, wild beasts, that may make food and fur:
And Indians, not yet civilized to crime.
As little thought he, as we think today
Of the strange foes two hundred years may bring
Beyond our lives and what we care for now.
Thank Heaven, we cannot know the future days!
Creative Wisdom never showed more wise.

The ancient place of graves treasures his name,—
The toiling man is now but formless dust,
The sturdy logs that built his first rude home
Long since are ashes. But no atom knows
Utter extinction. This we surely know,
Nothing is lost, no least, created thing.
It lives, it works, though in vast, silent rocks,
Though in sweet, dancing grasses of the field

Transformed so wide. Yet the informing power
Never forgets its homes. This shall we see
When we have eyes to see. Time still goes on.

No one hath seen him pass,
Yet Time's gray footprints blight the hardy grass,
And his long shadow lowers
Over the shrinking flowers.

There is no grace like that of gratitude,
Shall we forget the early settlers here,
Their names, their homes, their brave and patient lives?
Shall we be thoughtless of the careful gifts
From their small substance, to upbuild our town
Our church, our state, that we, secure may live?
Home toil, all working, gave to all a home
And something still to give, something to save,
From the same lands our luxury would decry,—
Those who would save the nation must beware.
Two foes will our Republic's conquerors prove,—
Luxury and waste, in cottage and in hall,
The frugal nation holds the master hand.

Truth and tradition oft lie far apart
But work and birth and death are close and sure.
At one end of the span springs into life
The worker. Then the varied arch of light
Rises, or bright, or dim, as rules the sun
Yet, at the end, fades quite away in death.

Graves—more graves!
Under blue skies, under blue waves:
Man, just grasping the full cup, dies,
And a new babe cries.

Their narrow bed, in undisturbed repose,
Oh, grudge them not, our hardy pioneers,
But teach the young, and our own hardening hearts
To cherish sacred dust and guard its rest.
Let not a heathen race, crowded and poor
Striving for simply food to keep alive,
Teach us this grace, by their great reverence
For their forefathers' graves, for ages long, untouched.
Our fathers' day is done, yet gleams the afterglow.
Today is nearly spent,—few more todays we know.
"Good Morrow!" voices call, from the fast fading light,
"The morning cometh ever, morning after the night."

HISTORICAL ADDRESS.

BY H. WILSON GIBBS.

Members of the Leominster Historical Society and Friends:

We are reminded at times by certain writers that civilization should pause in what seems to them a feverish and perilous advance, and hark back to the advice of those who have lived in the past.

We are not here today to hark back to the past, but to live back in memory for a while in the time of him, who was the first settler in Leominster. There is a poem, the first two stanzas of which seem appropriate for this occasion—

Away from the bustle and hurry;
Away from the care and strife,
Away from the toil and worry,
Away from the city life.

Away in the quiet country,
Enjoying the fresh, pure air,
To the weary city toiler
What peaceful rest is there.

We have come away from our cares and worries today, we have left the shops and factories, the stores and offices, we have left the steam and electric roads, and all that makes modern Leominster, to come up here where the beginning of the town was. There always has to be a beginning, it makes no difference what is done; whether it is the creation of a World or a Nation or a State, town or river, or in building a railroad, there has to be the first shovel of dirt thrown. Some time, somewhere, in some way, there has to be a beginning to every thing.

Some friends of mine once told me that they had drank from the spring that is the source of the Connecticut River. That spring has little to do with the waters flowing over the two million dollar dam at Holyoke or under the million dollar bridge at Hartford, but, nevertheless, it is the beginning of the river. The little English colony that settled on the coast of Virginia in the year 1607 was a very small and weak affair and after a few years of hard struggle they were ready

to pull up stakes and return to England, when news came to them of the settlement of the Pilgrims on the New England coast.

Then they came to the conclusion that they would stay: they had got neighbors now only four hundred miles away.

That colony had little to do with this nation of ninety millions of people, but it was the beginning, and the settlement at Plymouth Rock in December, 1620, was another small affair. One half of the Pilgrims died before the mayflowers bloomed in the spring, and they were buried in the sand and all traces of their graves obliterated for fear that the Indians would find out how weak the colony was growing.

That settlement was the beginning of our Commonwealth.

When, in the year 1725, Gershom Houghton erected the first house here it was the beginning of Leominster. Mr. Houghton was born in Lancaster in the year 1691.

In the Antiquarian room of our new library there is a deed that reads in part as follows:

To all People to whome these presents shall come,—Greeting, Know yee, that I, Robert Houghton of the town of Lancaster, In the County of Middlesex, In the Province of the Massachusetts Bay, in New England, Yeoman, for & in consideration of ye love I have for my son Gershom Houghton of sd Lancaster, & the Great Desire I Have for his comfortable settlement: and in part of his Portion: Do by these presents for myselfe, My Heirs, Executors & Administrators & with the free Consent of Hester my now married wife: freely fully & Absolutely Give Grant Convey Ratify Bequeath & Confirm unto my sd son Gershom Houghton above named all that my first Divission Lott of Upland in the New Addition of Land formerly Purchased of George Tohanto & some other Indians & since Confirmed by the Great & Generall Assembly of sd Province, & by them added to the Township of sd Lancaster:

My sd Lott therein being the third in number according to my Draught & as entered in the Records of sd Land & upon y northwest side of the fall Brook a little distant from it, & Bounded Northerly by the Lott which was the Lott of Capt. Thomas Wilder: & southerly by the Lott of James Wilder: my sd Lott containing by estimation about fourty acres, be it more or Less: also all my Medow Lott in the sd

Tract of Land, & Lyeth betwixt y Lott of Thomas Carter on the westerly side or southwest & the Ministeriall Lott on y Northeasterly side, & butts at each end on upland: My sd Lott Lying for five acres more or less, as the same was made out for two acres of Cleer Medow & three acres of Swamp: in Lieu of one acre of Medow: also one halfe of my Right in the Remaining part of sd Tract of Land & privilege accordingly in the Commonage & in the Division Last Granted to be Laid out & in all after Divisions thereof: all the said Grant parcels of Land & Medow, with one half of my Right & Privileges thereto belonging as aforesaid: be the same more or less in Quantity or Quality, to be to him my sd son, y above named Gershom Houghton: to him, His Heirs executors Administrators & Assigines TO Have And to Hold: & quietly & peaceably to Possess & enjoy the same, in a sure possession & estate of Inheritance In fee for Ever, without any Lawfull Lett, Denial, eviction, ejection, Molestation, Disturbance or Contradiction from or by me the sd Robert Houghton: or any my Heirs, executors or Administrators: or from or by any other Person or Persons by, from or under me, the sd Robert Houghton, or any my Heirs or Assigines: or by or under any other Pretence whatsoever: Lawfully Claiming or Having any Right, Title or Interest therein or to any part thereof, whereby my sd son Gershom Houghton, or any his Heirs, executors, Administrators or Assigines, shall or may by any meanes at any time be molested in or ejected out of the quiet & Peaceable Possession of all or any part of the above granted pmisses: & for the true & full Performance of all as above Granted & expressed, I, the sd Robert Houghton, Have Hereunto set my Hand & seal this fourth Day of November, In the tenth yeare of the Reign of our Lord George of Great Brittain & King Anno Domini one thousand seven Hundred & twenty three.

Signed, sealed & Delivered in presns of Robert Houghton

John Houghton Jr.

His Mark

William Houghton

Middlesex SS, November 4th, 1723

The above named Robert Houghton Personally appeared & Acknowledged the above written instrument to be his free act & Deed. before me John Houghton Justice of y Peace

Middle Camb: Dec. 26th, 1723

Received and Entered with the Regisy of sd County Lib 22
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At the time this deed was made Lancaster was in Middlesex County. A new county was created in the year 1731 out of parts of Hampshire, Suffolk and Middlesex counties. The name of the new county would probably have been Lancaster if the citizens of that town had been willing that Lancaster be made the county seat, but some of them were unwilling. The reason they gave was that there was always a rough element that gathered in a Shire town: there would be too much drunkenness and disorder and so Worcester was made the county seat, and the county named Worcester County.

The objections of some of the citizens of Lancaster were not without reason, for the opening of the county court in those days was generally followed by a debauch that lasted through the sitting of the court. The nights were generally spent in drinking and revelry. The plaintiff or defendant that "Set 'em up" the most frequently won his case regardless of evidence.

The bibulous citizens for miles around would flock to the County seat in court time to participate in the free booze that was too often on tap.

The Judges were often incompetent for their position on account of ignorance. The lawyers were no better: as a rule they knew very little about law and most of them were grafters. The legal profession in those days was not looked upon with much respect, and a quiet, orderly community was not anxious to be the county seat.

The original farm was a farm of 125 acres; it has since been divided.

In the year 1724 Gershom Houghton married Elizabeth Rugg, daughter of Daniel and Elizabeth Rugg, of Lancaster. In the following year he began the construction of a house here. Naturally the first thought one would have in regard to this house, it being the first house in town and built miles away from any other house, and taking into consideration the age in which it was built, that it was a log house, with the chinks between the logs filled in with clay or mortar, with a chimney built of stone, with oiled paper for windows, and a door creaking on wooden hinges, but such was not the case.

It was a framed house, and well built, with hewn oak timbers. It was low studded, with the roof on the back side reaching nearly to the ground, a common style of architecture prevailing in those times. The chimney was largely built of stones, and according to tradition, Mrs. Houghton assisted her husband in the construction of it, by bringing stone in her stout, home-spun, woolen apron, and this was no hardship on her part, for she was a large, stout woman, and superintended the construction of her house and about everything else.

Gershom Houghton was 33 years old when he was married. A great deal of his time previous to this he had been employed as an Indian scout in company with a noted Indian scout of these days, by the name of Whitcomb. There was a time when the Massachusetts Colony made it very profitable to hunt Indians, as there was a bounty of \$1,000 on Indian scalps. Mr. Houghton was not a large man. He was rather small of stature, very quick and active. He made a good scout and would have been a good athlete in our times.

At the time he began this settlement the forest was the master of the situation. Where all the houses in town now are was then woods, to subdue and overcome which was man's first work, and here was where the silence of the primeval forest was first broken by the sound of the white man's axe.

It was not Leominster then,—the land belonging to the old Lancaster Plantation. Leominster was born in 1725, but the child was not named until it was fifteen years old. In 1740 the town was incorporated, but why it was named Leominster history gives us no information, and even tradition is silent. We are a very exclusive town, in that we share our name with only one other town in the world, and that 3,000 miles away, in old England.

There were no Indians left in this section to cause any trouble. There were still left in New England some remnants of tribes that 50 years before had lived here and owned the territory. The land in this vicinity had belonged to the Nashaways, once a numerically strong and powerful tribe. George Tahanto was the Chief or Sagamore of this tribe, who sold and deeded this land or farm to Robert Houghton and others in the year 1701.

There was trouble with the Indians about 20 years after

this settlement during the French and Indian war; detachments of Indians came down from Canada, killed some settlers, took some prisoners and burned buildings, and soldiers were sent to this town to protect the inhabitants, but the Indians steered clear of this place for some unknown reason.

The passage of time lends enchantment to some things and it certainly does to the event we commemorate today. Men come and go and the deeds that they do are soon forgotten. A man is not much of a man who does not want to do something that will be permanent, something that will abide, something by which to be remembered, but it falls to the lot of very few men to do this. By erecting this memorial here today we announce to the public that what Gershom Houghton did, has not been, and is not to be forgotten.

Here was where the first trees were cut to be used in the construction of a home and the clearing of land for a farm. The trees gave way reluctantly and the stumps held the ground for a long time.

Here was where the plow was first introduced to Leominster soil and the cultivator and hoe were used. Here was dug the first cellar and the first well (and that is here now) and it is 20 feet deep. In this house was laid the first hearth-stone. This was the first house to be illuminated by the light of the fire-place and the tallow candle. Fire was built by coals brought from the nearest neighbors or by tinder box and flint. Here was where bread, beans and cake were baked in the first brick oven in town. Here was where civilization began with three square meals a day.

The Indians were in the habit of eating all of the time when they had anything to eat, and of course when they did not they had to go without. It was always a case of a feast or a famine with them.

Here in this house was first heard the hum of the spinning wheel and the pounding of the hand loom; here hung the flint lock gun and the powder horn. Here was where the gourd dipper was first used and the splint broom swept the floor clean, and the turkey wing brushed the ashes up on the hearth. Here was where the first baby was born and the first cradle rocked. Here was where the first well-sweep hung in the air and the old oaken bucket was used. Here first grew the wheat, corn and pumpkins and the lilacs and hollyhocks beside the

kitchen door. In the attic of this house hung bunches of catnip, sage, motherwort, thorowort and pennyroyal, potential remedies for human ailments in those times.

To this home the doctor come on horseback or in a chaise; if on horseback his saddle-bags would be full of medicine that was a decoction and it was often worse to take than the disease. The medical fraternity labored under the hallucination that the more ingredients that they got into a medicine the better it was. They were in hopes of getting in something that would hit the disease, and so, in this expectation, they put in everything that they could think of. The late Mark Twain wrote an article that was published in Scribners Magazine some years ago, in which he gave several of the old medical formulas; they contained from 20 to 45 ingredients, and he stated that trying to cure disease with such medicine was a good deal like trying to drive skippers out of cheese with artillery. But the doctors did the best they knew how; we have reason to be truly grateful for the advance in medical science since Gershom Houghton's days.

From their home Gershom Houghton and his family went every Sunday that they were able to go to Lancaster to church. It was 18 years after he settled here before the first church was organized in town. He was one of the first pew holders. Dr. Stebbins states in his Centennial discourse, that "Gershom Houghton, from modesty or some other cause, took number eight, behind the door on the west side of the entrance." He leaves it optional with us to think it was from modesty, and so let us think. It was a grand, good old custom in those days for every one to go to church; it would be better for the Country if the custom was more prevalent to-day. People need the church to tone them up spiritually, morally and intellectually.

Here was where Thanksgiving and Fast Day were first observed in town: these, with military training days, were the only holidays then in existence, and these were not holidays. They were then considered more of a sacred day. The Fourth of July was over 50 years in the distance, great events must take place, and a long hard war be fought before what that day commemorates was consummated.

Around this home were gathered the first accoutrements of civilization in town. Here was first heard the lowing of cat-

tle, the neighing of the horse, the bleating of sheep, the barking of the dog, the cackling of hens, and the squealing of the pig. No farm life would be well balanced in those days, or even later, without this combination, and it was doubtless all here sooner or later.

The first fire in town was not built in this house. The Indians in their wigwams around Lake Chualoom or Whalom or on the banks of the Nashaway, built the first fires; but the Indians did not know how to build a fire economically; more heat went to waste than they could utilize. But here in this home fire was built in a civilized and economical way for those times.

Near here was the old Indian trail leading from Washakum Lake in what is now Sterling to Whalom Pond. The headquarters of the Nashaways was at Washakum. Here lived the famous Sagamore or Chief Sholan, Matthew, Shoshamin, Wansquan, Tohanto, and others in their day, and here John Elliott, the apostle to the Indians, preached the gospel to the Nashaways. This trail was well defined in the days of Gershom Houghton, but time has obliterated all traces of it.

Here in this house sat the young couple, in the warmth and glow of the fire place, while the winter storms roared and raged without, piling the drifting snow higher and higher, and here, in summer time they slept, breathing the pure ozone of the unlimited forest, untainted by the smoke from numerous factories or railroad locomotives, and here they used to sit on summer evenings and watch the stars come out in the sky, and probably never once dreamed that they were founding a town that in 1910 would have 17,000 inhabitants.

We are treading on historic ground, not made historic by Indian warfare, that has made so many places in our neighboring towns historic, for the only battle fought here was man's, with the adverse elements in nature for an existence, a battle in which man won for a time.

To this house was built the first road: from this place the settlement of the town was advanced, but not at once for Mr. Houghton and his family were the sole residents of what is now the town for seven years.

Rome was founded by one man and so was our town; in that distinction we are on an equality with the Eternal City.

Gershom Houghton's family was not large; they raised only

two children, one son by the name of Abiathar, who married Judith Boutelle. They had eleven children, none of them living to grow up and one daughter whose name was Tamar. She married Levi Woods of Petersham, but they made their home in this town, and some of their descendants live here now.

The only remnant of the old house known to be in existence is a diamond shaped pane of glass in one of the cases in the Town Museum.

Mrs. Houghton outlived her husband and was married the second time to Daniel Knight, whom she also outlived, and for economy's sake or the lack of means she erected in the northeast corner of the old cemetery, a double stone, on one side of which is an inscription to Daniel Knight, and on the other an inscription to Gershom Houghton. There was not room enough on the stone for the whole of the word "Houghton" but a caret under part of the word indicates where you will find the rest.

The inscription reads "In memory of Gershom Houghton, who died April 3, A. D. 1757, in the 66 year of his age"

She was thoughtful enough to erect with loving care a stone to her two husbands, but her remains lie somewhere in the old Pine Tree Cemetery, the spot unknown and unmarked.

Little do present generations realize the deprivations, hardships and perils of the early settlers, of those who have gone before and blazed the way for others to follow. We think our times are strenuous and we complain of our lot and do not realize that those who have preceded us have had a harder lot, and in many ways have smoothed the way for us.

By recording their deeds on stone we in part, show our gratitude to them.

Peter Boyden bought the old house and farm in the year 1822 of John Woods, a son of Tamar Woods. He soon after built a new house and took the old house down. He was succeeded in ownership of the farm by his son, Charles, who was succeeded in turn by his son, William Boyden, the present owner.

REMARKS OF REV. GEORGE LEONARD CHANEY.

Mr. Chaney who had been asked to speak on the value of a Historical Society in really historic towns, after describing the work of the Essex Institute, the Peabody Academy of Science and agencies of a similar kind in Salem, spoke in part as follows:

I have described some of the ways in which my native city preserves the increasing treasure of its antiquities and helps the present time to know itself by learning its past. Rightly to know today, we must remember the days that are gone and to know himself—which has been accounted man's highest wisdom—is to know his ancestors.

I once heard Wendell Phillips, addressing the Phi Beta Kappa Society, declare in his audacious manner, that history was the mother of lies. As histories used to be written, his declaration was no lie. But we live in a time when the materials for history are sought not alone, or chiefly in the annals of war and the machinations of rival kings, princes and politicians, but in the daily living and pursuits of common people, in domestic ways and the doings of the shop and field. The records and memorials of these are found in old account books, old letters, old furniture, old coins, old newspapers, old journals—the very scum of the times as it was regarded—which rises to the surface in old-time attics or the dregs which settle in damp and unused cellars.

It is to find and rescue these seeds of real history and to give them careful keeping and profitable use, that Historical Societies like that which dedicates this stone of memory to the first settler in Leominster exist. Next to the first settler, the first society which seeks to keep his memory green is the most worthy candidate for our favor and praise, and we may be sure that the young society which plants this memorial today, is laying the corner stone of a house of memory, which will endure, when all our lesser habitations are in the dust. Already the beginning is made. To this Peace-Abbey will be gathered the relics and illustrations of what we may call our Present-past. So close upon the heels of all we do, press the footsteps of all that has been done.

By way of instance and example of the suggestive value of the least accounted things that enter into the customary life

of each and every generation, let me tell you of a pilgrimage I once made to the seat of the Carter family at Corotoman, in old Virginia. The motive of this voyage of recovery, was a lurking desire to identify, if possible, the Southern and Northern branches of a family, which had furnished so many illustrious and useful citizens to our common country. With William Henry Harrison and Robert E. Lee, on the Southern branch, and a host of less conspicuous, but not less worthy buds and twigs on the northern limb, the union of the two families in one central trunk, if it could be traced, would be a happy conjunction.

We went down the Rappahannock river from Fredericksburg to Corotoman, catching glimpses of history-haunted old mansions, by the way, until we came to our desired haven. But we found and recalled the great and glorious past, only in its ruins. Christ Church built by Robert Carter in 1738, still stood in half-arrested decay, but of the mansion of King Carter, almost nothing was left to tell the lordly and romantic tale. The plain, hard-working farmer who leased and cultivated the land, had turned up with his plow some lead, which showed where the walls of the great house had stood and gone down in fire and a few fragments of the marble pavements were upheaved. Besides these, nothing remained to proclaim the pride and grandeur of the ancient, colonial hall. But yes, there was one other relic. The farmer brought us two or three glass seals with the name of Robin Carter in them. These seals had been stamped upon the wine bottles which had been imported from France. Long buried in the ground these brittle survivors of forgotten feasts had acquired an iridescent hue and golden coating, and seemed as if striving even in their low estate to maintain the brilliant gentility of their first appearance.

Two or three bits of broken wine bottles were all that remained of the wealth, beauty and luxury that were once Corotoman.

And yet to the brooding mind and reminiscent heart what a story of industrial energy and success, elegant and costly hospitality, transplanted luxury, enriched by the dainty contribution of seaside and forest, old custom stubbornly maintaining itself in the new order, what intimation and prophecy of what Time had in store and we have today in growing ful-

filment—New Europe in broad America—are symbolized in these broken bits of glass!

Nothing is so small or insignificant that it may not, if long-kept and well observed, help to reveal to us the past or passing days. And what a commentary upon all our vanishing or ever-changing greatness of family, town or nation, this sole relic, a fragment of a broken wine bottle, with the name and coat of arms of its one-time strong and proud possessor!

By a noteworthy coincidence, the only discoverable remnant of the house of Gershom Houghton which stood on this spot, is a diamond-shaped window pane which is preserved among the wrecks of time in our Town Library.

To gather up and save and as the mood takes us, by their aid, to restore the past and relearn its lessons is the mission of the Leominster Historical Society. We invite you all to take part in its interesting and useful work and privilege.

PRESENTATION TO THE TOWN BY F. R. TUCKER.

In behalf of the Leominster Historical Society, I want to thank all who have so kindly aided in making this celebration a splendid success. I want to thank especially Mr. Boyden, who has allowed us the use of his grounds. I wish to thank the honorable board of selectmen in allowing us to place this stone in the limits of the highway.

And now Mr. Chairman Nutting, in behalf of the Historical Society, I present to the Town this Marker, asking that it shall receive the same care as other property of the Town.

ACCEPTANCE FOR THE TOWN BY E. H. NUTTING.

Mr. President.

As Chairman of the Board of Selectmen, I accept on behalf of the citizens of Leominster, this Boulder, marking the place where the first house stood. I trust that it will be one of the duties of this society to see that the Selectmen or the proper officers when this town becomes a city, preserve this Boulder in its present place and condition until time is no more.

The Leominster Historical Society was organized January 31, 1906, and incorporated, November 8, 1906.

The names of the officers and committee.

President, PERLEY M. RUSSELL.

Vice-Presidents, H. W. GIBBS,

MRS. D. M. WOODS.

Secretary, CHARLES S. HOUGHTON.

Treasurer, FRED F. HILLS.

Executive Committee,

MISS MARY A. TOLMAN,

MISS FANNIE P. GATES,

MRS. L. E. ROGERS.

Curator, MISS FLORENCE E. WHEELER.

Historian, MRS. F. W. BURDITT.

The names of members of the Society:—

Abbot, Dr. G. E.	Holman, Mrs. Ira
Bouley, Mrs. Harriet L.	Houghton, Charles S.
Brooks, Miss Emily.	Hills, Fred B.
Brigham, Dr. C. S.	Kittredge, Mrs. Anna K.
Bennett, Mrs. F. E.	Lincoln, Miss E. M.
Burditt, Mrs. F. W.	Moore, Miss Emma C.
Chaney, Mrs. Caroline I.	Rogers, Mrs. L. E.
Chaney, George L.	Rogers, Carl
Chaney, Oliver Carter	Rogers, Ralph E.
Chase, Charles S.	Russell, Perley M.
Gallup, Mrs. Sarah F.	Russell, Mrs. Estelle W.
Gibbs, H. Wilson	Russell, Mrs. Martha M.
Gates, Miss Abbie E.	Tucker, Frank R.
Gates, Miss Fannie P.	Tucker, Mrs. Eva L.
Greenwood, Miss Helen W.	Tolman, Mrs. Mary A.
Hale, Miss Annie C.	Wheeler, Miss Florence E.
Hobbs, Mrs. Jennie	Woods, Mrs. D. M.

HONORARY MEMBERS.

Edgerly, Sophronia,	Perry, Mr. Willard
Bodge, Rev. George M.	Newton, Sarah
Phillips, Mrs. Abbie R.	*Piper, Mrs. Porter
Marshall, Mrs. Sarah	*Lincoln, Miss Mary Ann
Lawrence, Miss Elizabeth	Small, Mr. Ernest W.

CORRESPONDING MEMBER.

Wilder, Mrs. Fannie G.
*Deceased.

CONSTITUTION OF THE LEOMINSTER
HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

NAME.

Article 1. The name of the Society shall be The Leominster Historical Society.

OBJECT.

Article 2. The object of the Society is the collection, preservation and study of historical matters, pertaining to the town and its inhabitants.

OFFICERS.

Article 3. The officers of this society shall be a President, two Vice Presidents, Secretary and a Treasurer, to be elected by ballot at the annual meeting, to hold office for one year or until other officers are chosen. At the same meeting three other members shall be chosen in a like manner, and for a like term, who, together with the officers, shall have general charge of all matters pertaining to the interests of the society. The board shall appoint a curator and may appoint other committees as occasion requires.

DUTIES OF OFFICERS.

Article 4. 1. It shall be the duty of the President to preside at the meetings of the society. In his absence it shall be the duty of the First Vice President, and in his absence, the duty of the second Vice President to preside, and in the absence of all three, a President *pro tempore* shall be chosen.

2. It shall be the duty of the Secretary to keep in a book for that purpose, a record of all meetings of the society, to issue all notices of the meetings of the society, to notify all members of their election to office who may not be present at the time of their election to office, to conduct the general correspondence of the society, and at the expiration of his term of office, to turn over to his successor all books and papers belonging to the society.

3. The Treasurer shall be sole custodian of all funds of the society. He shall assess and collect all dues and

taxes voted by the society. Shall disburse the money so received and collected, on a written order signed by the President and Secretary, but not otherwise. He shall keep in a book provided for that purpose a true account of all receipts and disbursements, shall submit the same to the inspection of any member when requested; and shall, at the expiration of his term of office, deliver into the hands of his successor, all books, papers and other property, belonging to the society.

4. The curator shall be the sole custodian, and have charge or care of all books, pamphlets, coins, relics, portraits and other collections belonging to the society. Shall list the same in a book kept for that purpose and shall at the annual meeting, give a full report of his work during the year.

MEETINGS.

Article 5. The annual meeting for the election of officers and such other business as may properly and legally come before the society, shall be held on the second Thursday of February of each year, at which time the annual reports of the officers shall be presented in writing. The regular meetings shall be held on the second Thursday of each month, save July and August. Special meetings may be called at any time by the executive committee.

MEMBERS.

Article 6. 1. Any person may be elected a member by a ballot at a regular meeting, by a majority vote of the members present and voting, the name of such person having been proposed in writing by a member in good standing at a previous meeting. No person shall be considered a member until he has signed the constitution and paid to the treasurer, the annual dues of fifty cents. 2. Active members may become life members by the payment at any time of \$10.00 into the treasury of the society and thereafter shall be exempt from all assessments.

HONORARY MEMBERS.

Article 7. Honorary and corresponding members and all persons not residing in Leominster, to be known as corre-

sponding members, who may wish to join the society, may be elected by ballot at a regular meeting by a majority vote of the members present and voting. The name of such persons having been proposed in writing by a member of the executive committee.

DUTIES OF MEMBERS.

Article 8. 1. It shall be the duty of members to fill any office or perform any service to which they may be elected or appointed, to contribute as far as possible to the number and value of the society's collection; to interest persons of similar tastes and pursuits and increase the membership to the extent of their power.

2. It will be expected of Honorary and Corresponding members that they will endeavor to add to the society's collections and advance the success of the society by correspondence or otherwise as they are able. Both Honorary and Corresponding members shall be entitled to all the privileges of active members, except the right to hold office, and shall be exempt from the dues and all assessments.

DUES.

Article 9. The annual dues shall be collected at the annual meeting.

QUORUM.

Article 10. Seven members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

FAILURES AND WITHDRAWALS.

Article 11. 1. Any member who for two consecutive years shall fail to pay any assessment made in accordance with the provisions of the constitution, and shall give no satisfactory reason therefor, shall cease to be a member of the society and the Treasurer shall notify the Secretary, who shall make a record of the fact.

2. Any member may withdraw from the society by giving notice of his intentions to the Secretary and paying all assessments, due at the time of giving such notice, and the Secretary shall make a record of the fact.

AMENDMENTS.

Article 12. The constitution may be altered or amended by a two-thirds vote of all present and voting at any annual meeting, provided notice of the intended change shall have been given in writing at two previous regular meetings.

Amendment I. Article V. By striking out the words "second Thursday of February" and inserting the words, "third Wednesday of November," and by striking out the words "second Thursday," and inserting the words, "third Wednesday."

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



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